

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al

vs

ARAKI, Sadao, et al

A F F I D A V I T

MAEDA Masami

1. I am Ex-Lieutenant-General MAEDA, Masami. I am living now at No. 1252, 5-Chome, Nishi Nakanobu, Shinagawa-Ku, Tokyo.

2. At the end of June, 1932, I was appointed Secretary to War Minister and in that capacity served General ARAKI until he resigned from the post of War Minister on January 23rd, 1934.

3. At the time when I assumed my new post, Manchoukuo had already declared her independence and the central army authorities were busy in devising the measures to cope with the situation. Upon my assumption of the post, the War Minister explained to me the mental attitude that a War Minister Secretary should always maintain in attending his duty. Among these, he emphatically stated with firm determination upon his face as follow.

"The Manchurian problems since the former Cabinet have unnaturally complicated. Despite the advocated non-expansion policy, they are gradually expanding as far as the disturbed area is concerned, and this state of affairs is not causing a good feeling among the foreign countries. On top of it, the recent Shanghai Incident served to aggravate the already deteriorated situation. It is my belief that the state of hostility must be immediately stopped in conformity with the government policy. Because of this belief, I have settled the Shanghai Incident, but I can not as yet feel reassured with the state of affairs in Manchuria. Furthermore, the recent birth of Manchoukuo has complicated the situation more than ever. At this juncture, it is very important that we should not make any false move which is against justice, and I am sure I will not do it. It can be expected that the general public as well as the people within the army circles will make various opinions about it, and so you must always be prepared to deal with them. However I may be criticized by others. I will not take any step which might induce to the occupation of Manchuria or cast a reflection upon the honor of a newly founded country.

4. At the time when the formal recognition of Manchoukuo was unanimously agreed upon at the Diet, and the government was absorbed in taking steps accordingly, the War Minister had a high regard for the views of the Foreign Office from the aspect of international law. When the government decided to formally recognize this state, he left all such matters as the time and procedures of recognition to the care of the Foreign Minister, and spared no pains in preventing further entanglement of international relations which might cause disturbances in Manchuria.

5. There was a considerably strong opinion at that time that Manchuria should be placed under Governor-General.

The War Minister was of the opinion that since the inhabitants of Manchuria had declared independence, it had to be respected. He said that such idea of treating it as a kind of colong was definitely wrong, and insisted upon exchange of ambassadors on an equal standing.

At the time when his assertion was realized, the hostilities had not yet been settled and the whole Manchuria revealed a state of a theatre of fighting. In view of the state, it was temporarily decided that the Commander-in-Chief of the Kwantung Army should concurrently be the Ambassador, and in accordance with this regulation, General MUTO who was appointed this post, belonged to the Foreign Minister as an Ambassador, to be in charge of diplomatic affairs, and as the Commander-in-Chief in Charge of military affairs, he belonged to the War Minister for military administrative matters and to the Chief of General Staff for operation. Thus War Minister ARAKI was exceedingly careful in respecting the independence of Manchukuo.

6. Minister ARAKI had a firm faith in his views on international justice. He believed that among the nations there should be a standard of moral based on the nature of human beings, in order to regulate their conduct, just as there should be the same among individuals. If the country with whom he was negotiating had sufficient cause of justice, he was not reluctant in admitting their request, even at the risk of suffering from certain inconveniences on our side.

At the time of importation of Siamese rice, a question which had begun at the end of 1933, he insisted that Japan should accede to the request of Siam even if it were to affect to some extent to our rural districts. At the occasion of the question of cotton piece goods from Lancashire, he said Japan should contribute to the international peace by making concession from boarder point of view. There was once a time when a dispute arose in the Diet with regard to a heavy burden of nearly 200,000,000 Yen which Japan had been paying, annually, to Manchoukuo. The Minister insisted, in answer to the question, that since Japan had decided to bring up and strengthen this new state as a younger brother, Japan as his elder brother should have such sympathy as to take off his own coat and give it to the younger brother even if he had to feel cold by doing so. The Minister added that to regard the Manchurian problems from mere materialistic view based on the mercenary consideration would be detrimental to the true spirit of Japan's Manchurian policy whose object was in the peace of the East.

7. It may be needless for me to add that, with regard to recognition of Manchoukuo and the international problems arising therefrom, Minister ARAKI respected the research and view of the Foreign Office over those problems and took such caution as would not infringe international law. He was also careful in this particular point in executing the duty of the army, and when the negotiation with the League was commenced, he was of the opinion to avoid withdrawal from the League, and insisted that Japan should do her best to get the League fully understand the actual state of affairs. When it was turned out that Japan had to quit from it, he still regarded it a temporary phenomenon and expected that something could be done about it at a later date.
8. Meanwhile, the Tangku Agreement was concluded and the hostilities in Manchuria were actually ended. After that he vehemently devoted himself to the task of working out means with which to secure peace in and round Japan, and continued this work until he resigned from his post. This work of his caused a misunderstanding among certain people, and he suffered from an agitation of expelling him from his post. Once he became an object of assassination. However these did not in any way discourage him of his work. He simply went on with all his might toward his idea of Far Eastern Peace Conference as one of the means of realizing his great ideal of world peace. He made a suggestion to the Premier to hold a Five Ministers' Conference among the ministers concerned from about September, and conferences were actually held over twenty times deliberating first upon national defense and diplomacy and then upon internal administrative problems, to frame an outline of each of those matters.
- It was at the end of December, 1933, after a Five Ministers' Conference on domestic administration with rural district problems as main point at issue war ended that he called me and confided me his desire of completing his preparation by the end of January of the following year when the Diet was to be convened, and to consolidate his plan into a definite form of a national policy at the Diet. In order to do so, he said he wanted to arrange into proper order and good shape all of his plans at a quiet place, undisturbed by the people, during the vacation at the end as well as the beginning of the year, and ordered me to select a suitable place to this purpose. I went to HATAGE Hot Spring Resort in IZU district on the New Year's Day to make a preparation, but on the night of the 2nd of January, I received a telegram instructing me to return to Tokyo on account of illness of the Minister.
10. For two weeks after my return the Minister Actually hovered between life and death and it was barely on about 17th of January that his doctor in attendance allowed him to see me. When I met him, he was too weak to talk enough. On the following day, he called me to his bed and asked me whether the government had further conference to debate upon his plan for national policy, and when I replied that the matter had been left alone, he conferred with Vice-Minister YANAGAWA. Then he called me again and dictated me a letter addressed to the Premier, expressing his intention of resigning from his post. The circumstances in which this letter and his basic plan for emergency policy were presented to the Premier have been stated in my affidavit (Def. Doc. No. 2133).

In the meantime, several cabinet ministers and the Chief Cabinet Secretary came to request me to change my mind about resignation, but the Minister only wished those people to set up national policies and did not change his mind.

11. During the First Shanghai Incident, I was serving under OBATA, Chief of operation Section, as one of the members of the General Staff. On March 15th, OBATA, Chief of the Section called me and ordered me as follow: "Truce Agreement was concluded in Shanghai and the expeditionary force in China is expected to return home, leaving behind it only a part of its strength. I want you to go over to Shanghai immediately and make an investigation as to which deviation of the force should be left behind. I want you also to consult this matter with the leading staff of the expeditionary force." Accordingly I went over to Shanghai and after several investigations, reached a conclusion that the 9th Division suited best to be left behind. With this report, I set forth on my return journey, but while I was still on board the ship, I received a telegram informing me of the decision that the whole troops were to return to Japan, and with it I knew that my mission to Shanghai was thrown away. I returned to Tokyo and reported to Section Chief OBATA, who told me that although the General Staff had had an intention of leaving a part of the force in Shanghai, War Minister ARAKI insisted upon overall withdrawal from his high regard to the sovereignty of China as well as from his principle of international harmony, and that the General Staff finally agreed to it.

12. Later, when I became a secretary to the War Minister, I had a chance of talking over this matter with the Minister. He said. "Military action should be conducted discretely and it must base upon justice. The action, once taken, must be swift, as otherwise it will disgrace the honor of sword," and so saying he depicted several instances during the Siberian Incident and cautioned me.

13. He spared no efforts in directing the young officers. I also did my best to enhance the Minister's intention to the young officers who had been indignant to the current situations in and round Japan, by sometimes scolding them, and sometimes exhorting them. The Minister often met them and personally admonished them not to commit an imprudence. Some of those pure and unstained young officers listened to him and devoted henceforth their unshattered attention to their military duty, wherease those who had bee made a cat's paw of the outer influence showed difficulty in observing his admonition, but the Minister successfully restrained them and kept them away from any of the improper conduct. Except for the case of the May 15 Incident, in which a few army cadets of the Military Academy, enticed by the navy officers, were participated, I do not believe there was a single army officer throughout the tenure of his War Ministership, who stepped out of the scope of his duty by acting recklessly.

14. I was very closely associated with the production of the movie picture entitled "Emergency Japan", as would be easily surmised by my appearing on the screen. This film was manufactured as the result of an ardent request of the Motion Picture Department of the OSAKA MAINICHI Newspaper.

The Newspaper Company first brought a draft of the Minister's speech for approval, but the Minister was not satisfied with it because he thought it had not sufficiently revealed the true feature of Japan and her troops, and in order to request the people their reflection upon themselves and, thereby, to promote their standard of morality and justice, he wrote a draft of speech of his own in the midst of his busy hours.

The Newspaper people had free hands in the manufacture of this film. The War Office and its Press Section had not directly associated themselves with the contents of this film, except only once when they rendered them some convenience by granting them a permit to take picture of maneuvers of the army force.

On the contrary, they cautioned the manufactures not to make a picture which might provoke an international sentiment.

15. As it was during the Manchurian Incident, the Minister had several visitors including Lord Lytton and other foreigners and foreign pressmen. In all of those occasions, Lieut-Col. FURUJO, Col. HOMMA or Major MATSUI worked as an interpreter and most of the cases, I also was present,

The contents of those interview were printed and preserved, and a copy of it was sent to those who had this interview. I know an interview which the Minister gave to Dr. Lind, a staff correspondent of a Switzerland newspaper, at the fall of 1932.

I have kept a copy of record of that interview as well as a questionnaire of Dr. Lind raised separately from the interview and the Minister's answer to the same.

I also remember the address made by Mr. Price, an English Journalist, on an occasion of a welcome lunch party given to his honor in March 1933, upon his return from an inspecting tour of Jehol. When the Minister met those people, his manner was frank and friendly, having an air of his fundamental desire for the establishment of the world peace in the future. He never refused an interview however busy he may have been.